IN THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Claims 1-3. (Canceled)

Claim 4.   (Currently Amended) A virtual mall apparatus comprising:

means for virtually constructing a virtual mall including a plurality of virtual shops[[;]] at which a Mix & Match (M&M) discount is achieved when at least two items subject to the M&M discount are respectively purchased from different shops;

means for generating a purchased item data when a purchase command is input, the purchase command indicating that a purchaser buys an item at one of the plurality of shops, the purchased item data including a store code identifying one of the virtual shops at which the item is purchased, an item code identifying the item purchased and [[a]] an M&M discount item flag indicating that the purchased item is [[a]] an M&M discount item, the M&M discount item flag being set where the purchased item is specified as [[a]] an M&M discount item by one of the plurality of shops;

means for notifying the purchaser that the purchased item is subject to the M&M discount based on the M&M discount item flag;

means for discriminating whether items indicated by at least two M&M discount item flags in a plurality of purchased item data are respectively purchased from different shops based on the purchased item data; and

means for executing [[a]] an M&M discount if the discriminating means determines that the items indicated by the at least two M&M discount item flags are purchased from different shops.

Claim 5.   (Currently Amended) An apparatus according to claim 4, wherein the M&M discount is applied to items of different shops indicated by the at least two M&M discount item flags, further including means for collecting each discount applied to the items classified by shop.

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Claim 6.   (Currently Amended) An apparatus according to claim 4 further including means for selecting one item from at least two different items indicated by at least two M&M discount item flags if the at least two different items indicated by the at least two M&M discount item flags are purchased at the same shop.

Claim 7.   (Currently Amended) An apparatus according to claim 6, wherein each item of the at least two different items has a selling price and the selecting means includes means for comparing a selling price of one of the at least two different items with a selling price of the other item to select one item having a higher selling price if selling prices of the at least two different items are different from one another when the M&M discount is performed.

Claim 8.   (Currently Amended) A method for performing [[a]] an Mix & Match (M&M) discount service in a virtual mall [[which comprises]] comprising a plurality of virtual shops[[,]] when at least two items subject to an M&M discount are respectively purchased from different shops: including steps of:

     generating a purchased item data when a purchase command is input, the purchase command indicating that a purchaser buys an item at one of the plurality of shops, the purchased item data including a store code identifying one of the virtual shops at which the item is purchased, an item code identifying the item purchased and [[a]] an M&M discount item flag indicating that the purchased item is [[a]] an M&M discount item, the M&M discount item flag being set where the purchased item is specified as [[a]] an M&M discount item by one of the plurality of shops;

     notifying the purchaser that the purchased item is subject to the M&M discount based on the M&M discount item flag;

     discriminating whether items indicated by at least two M&M discount item flags in a plurality of purchased item data are respectively purchased from different shops based on the purchased item data; and

     executing [[a]] an M&M discount if the discriminating means determines that the items indicated by the at least two M&M discount item flags are respectively purchased from different shops.

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Claim 9.   (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 8 further including step of selecting one item from at least two different items indicated by at least two M&M discount item flags if the at least two different items indicated by the at least two M&M discount item flags are purchased at the same shop.

Claim 10.   (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 9, wherein each item of the at least two different items has a selling price and the selecting step includes step of comparing a selling price of one of the at least two different items [[with]] and a selling price of the other item to select one item having a higher selling price if prices of [[the]] at least two different items are different [[to]] from one another when the M&M discount is performed.

Claim 11.   (Currently Amended) ~~Computer~~ A set of computer executable [[codes]] instructions, stored in a computer readable medium, which when executed [[codes]] operates to:

virtually ~~creating~~ creates a virtual mall including a plurality of virtual shops[[;]] at which a Mix & Match (M&M) discount is achieved when at least two items subject to the M&M discount are respectively purchased from different shops;

~~generating~~ generates a purchased item data when a purchase command is input, the purchase command indicating that a purchaser buys an item at one of the plurality of shops, the purchased item data including a store code identifying one of the virtual shops at which the item is purchased, an item code identifying the item purchased and [[a]] an M&M discount item flag indicating that the purchased item is [[a]] an M&M discount item, the M&M discount item flag being set where the purchased item is specified as [[a]] an M&M discount item by one of the plurality of shops;

notifies the purchaser that the purchased item is subject to the M&M discount based on the M&M discount item flag;

~~discriminating~~ discriminates whether items indicated by at least two M&M discount item flags in a plurality of purchased item data are respectively purchased from different shops based on the purchased item data; and

~~executing a~~ executes an M&M discount if the items indicated by the at least two M&M discount item flags are purchased from different shops.

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Claim 12.   (Currently Amended) ~~Computer~~ The set of computer executable [[codes]] instructions according to claim 11 further selecting one item from at least two different items indicated by at least two M&M discount item flags if the at least two different items indicated by the at least two M&M discount item are purchased at the same shop.

Claim 13.   (Currently Amended) ~~Computer~~ The set of computer executable [[codes]] instructions according to claim 11, wherein each item of the at least two different items has a selling price, comparing a selling price of one of the at least two different items with a selling price of the other item to select one item having a higher selling price if prices of the at least two different items are different from one another when the M&M discount is performed.

Claim 14.   (New) An apparatus according to claim 4, wherein the means for notifying the purchaser that the purchased item is subject to the M&M discount further comprises means for notifying the purchaser that the purchaser can get the M&M discount if the purchaser buys at least one other M&M item at a different shop.

Claim 15.   (New) A method according to claim 8, wherein notifying the purchaser that the purchased item is subject to the M&M discount further comprises notifying the purchaser that the purchaser can get the M&M discount if the purchaser buys at least one other M&M item at different shop.

Claim 16.   (New) The set of computer executable instructions according to claim 11, wherein notifying the purchaser that the purchased item is subject to the M&M discount further comprises notifying the purchaser that the purchaser can get the M&M discount if the purchaser buys at least one other M&M item at different shop.